

Article by Ross Walker

SOMETIMES GLADNESS: COLLECTED POEMS 1954–2005

Bruce Dawe

INTRODUCTION

Bruce Dawe, born in Geelong in 1930, is widely recognised as one of Australia's greatest living poets. He has written prolifically since the 1950s, and his poetry reveals the considerable breadth of his concerns. His poetic world is densely populated: he writes with great empathy about people of every kind and social station, from the humble to the exalted. The sharpness of his observations and perception of these people is unerring. Meditations on identity are key elements of Dawe's poetry as are the lives of everyday people – their times of sadness or gladness. This is reflected in the epigraph to Dawe's anthology, *Condolences of the Season* (1972): 'When all is said and done there is only the people ... always and everywhere, *the people*' (Horst Gochnauer). Positioning himself as one of these ordinary people, Dawe's private world constantly intersects with the worlds of those who inhabit his poems. In his introduction to the most recent edition of *Sometimes Gladness*, he reminds us that 'Each of us is both a private person and a public person, an 'I' and a 'we' (p.xx).

Identity and Belonging in Sometimes Gladness

The concept of identity

Some years ago, I wrote an article for a Melbourne newspaper on the theme of 'identity', as it was demonstrated in a group of texts set for study in VCE English that year. Looking back, I can see that I approached this concept too simplistically, for the idea of identity is indeed both complex and problematic. It is no longer enough to declare, as we might once have been tempted to do, that our identity is simply a matter of 'who we are'. New questions arise. Is our identity solid and fixed? No, we are a work in progress from the day of our birth to the day of our death. Is our identity, then, in a state of constant flux?

We would hope not, as we all need some solid underpinning to our personality and character. If not, we may have no focus or solid core in our lives. Dawe's poems show us various ways in which people attain an enduring sense of both identity and of belonging. In his love poems addressed to his late wife, Gloria, and his current wife, Liz, for example, he shows how an intimate love relationship can give us a sense of security and contentment.

Ideally, we would like to be able to stand before the world and say: 'this is who I am, and I am happy about it.' But life is rarely so simple. As Dawe declares in 'After You, Gary Cooper ...' (p.19):

One of the main things I would say
(off-hand, of course) about this
awkward proposition known as
Life, is that it can be a bit of a
bastard if you don't happen to have
the basic formula for facing it
ready to hand –

In addition to the daily trials faced on the journey of life, many people live with personal problems that prevent them growing into the people they would really like to be. We know, for example, that when many American and Australian veterans of the Vietnam War returned home they were changed men, no longer sure of themselves and their place in the world. Often, people who confront traumatic experiences will need to adapt, to find a new sense of self in order to integrate those experiences and move beyond them. Many life experiences – not only traumatic ones – may compel us to alter our sense of self. If positive experiences and influences come into our lives, we may enjoy a newly expanded sense of personal possibility.

Belonging

Even if we lead lives of isolation, we are all inevitably woven into the fabric of lives other than our own. The social groupings of which we are a part – families, clubs, workplaces and the like – are usually an important part of our sense of self. Such groups provide a connection to others. But many of Dawe's poems also highlight ways in which people are marginalised from the mainstream of society, as well as from their own best possibilities. People often choose to define themselves in opposition to traditional social groups. They may, for

example, reject their parents as role models and resolve not to ever be like them. Instead of feeling they belong, such people may feel alienated from the people and groups around them. From our earliest days, many of us are given, metaphorically speaking, a script for our lives and we act it out, even if it does not really suit us. Sometimes, however, when we take time to reflect on these things that we take for granted, moments of insight arise – we are prompted to abandon the script we have been given and to begin to write our own script instead.

IDEAS & ARGUMENTS IN THE TEXT

Sometimes Gladness advances a number of key ideas relevant to the Context *Exploring Issues of Identity and Belonging*. These are outlined below and will be developed further in the following section.

Overview of key ideas and arguments

A sense of identity and where we belong may be given to us from birth

Some of us are born into family circumstances that immediately give our lives focus and meaning. Families – their traditions and expectations – play a crucial role in our development as human beings. Often, the parameters of our identity are imposed on us by these traditions, expectations and other social responsibilities. Sometimes, as a result of this identity, people go through their whole lives without ever questioning who they are and where they truly belong. As a result, they may fail to become the people they could have become. Do we, then, need to examine and reflect on our lives in order to live authentically and discover who we really are?

Life can be difficult for those outside the mainstream of society

A number of poems in *Sometimes Gladness* are about people who lack a strong sense of belonging. These poems raise questions that explore the complexity of life for those who are positioned outside of mainstream society and told that they do not belong or fit. Is a sense of belonging a basic human need? To what extent do we need to adapt in order to fit into new environments?

Some people actively choose not to belong

Some of Dawe's poems demonstrate that social conventions and institutions such as marriage, family or political parties can become prisons from which people long to escape. These conventions and institutions can cramp, rather than liberate. Sometimes people will take drastic measures to escape from the institutions to which they belong, and actively opt out of the sense of belonging they can provide.

Intimate relationships with others teach us who we are

Our sense of identity and of personal security can be strengthened by our ties to those we love, especially those with whom we share intimate relationships. Some intimate relationships bring uncomplicated joy, while others can be more problematic. How far will some people go in order to be with the people with whom they feel they truly belong?

Our individual identity exists within a vast connected universe

Individual people are part of many communities. Some of Dawe's poems confirm that we can develop our sense of who we are by acknowledging that we are only one small part of a vast universe. His poems are populated by spiritual characters who belong to both small communities and the wider world. Dawe demonstrates that we need not think of ourselves as the centre of everything, but rather as one important part of everything. Animals, too, are presented as an important part of the world.

Analysis of key ideas and arguments***Born into a place in life***

A sense of self and where we belong may be impressed upon us from the moment we enter the world. The early poem, 'Enter Without So Much as Knocking' (p.14) and the popular 'Life-cycle' (p.86) illustrate that our senses of identity and belonging can be given to us from birth. Unhappily, sometimes people never question the assumptions and values which have been passed down to them. Other people are born into rich traditions and rituals which give their lives continuity, meaning, and a sense of belonging.

Each of these poems tells the story of a birth and of the life that follows it.

'Enter Without So Much as Knocking' is a scathing critique of the unreflective, materialistic life. The brief life of the poem's central character is described from his arrival home as a babe in arms to his violent death in a motor accident. From his earliest hours, the baby is assailed by consumerist noise, from the shouting of television presenters to the relentless beeping of motor traffic. His world is harsh, strident and metallic. Dawe gives the poem a sense of rapid, relentless movement. It is as if his central character is trapped on a conveyor belt, shunted from one stage of life to the next with no time for stillness and reflection. The closest he can come to escape is when he watches the stars overhead on a clear night at the drive-in: standing beyond the world of frantic movement and materialism is the sky, 'littered with stars/ no one had got around to fixing up yet'.

The word 'littered', of course, is used ironically by Dawe to reflect the perspective of the 'godless/ money-hungry back-stabbing miserable/ so-and-so[s]' among whom the now young man belongs. He enters their world of harsh competition and adopts its clichéd language. His death – it is sadly appropriate that this occurs in a car accident – continues the depressing process of his life. The morticians 'did a really first-class job on his face' presumably disfigured in the accident. This phrase suggests that the young man's 'face' has really always been artificial: indeed, he has never really had the chance to discover his true self. Wearing a mask, he has never displayed anything of greater authenticity than 'the old automatic smile with nothing behind it'. The world into which he was born, ironically, permitted this.

In the aptly named 'Life-cycle' Dawe relates, again chronologically, another cradle to grave story, but in a contrasting voice to that employed in 'Enter Without So Much as Knocking'. It is light-hearted, at times gently mocking, but altogether positive. The children born into football-mad households in Victoria are given, from birth, a focus and a structure to their lives. Football, as a social institution, provides traditions and structures. Before they can become anything else, these children are identified with the family team – a 'little Tiger', or Saint, or whatever. The game provides continuity from generation to generation –

just as the infant barracker becomes the feeble, elderly barracker nearing the end of his life, so the game itself goes on, 'the dancers changing/ But the dance forever the same'.

Indeed, Dawe makes it clear that the game takes on religious significance. The young barrackers hearts are evocatively 'shrapnelled with rapture'; a 'covenant' is sealed between them and the game, and they 'behold their team going up the ladder into Heaven'. And, at the end of their lives, their personal salvation is not to be found in the God of Christianity, but rather in 'the six-foot recruit from Eaglehawk'. For fanatical football barrackers, the meaning of their lives is inextricably tied to the fortunes of their team.

Discussion questions

- Is it necessary for us to reflect upon our own lives in order to live authentically? Take a few minutes to think about your own lives. Do you think the pressures of modern life make such reflection nearly impossible?
- Can people ever identify with a sporting club or organisation as strongly as they might identify with a family?

Those on the margins

Many of Dawe's poems are concerned with the lives of those who do not belong to the mainstream of society, but rather who are defined by their status as those on the margins, or outsiders, in various ways. 'The Flashing of Badges' (p.24), 'The Boy' (p.145), 'Drifters' (p.94), 'Cravensville' (p.123), 'Migrants' (p.126) and 'Exiles' (p.217), are linked by their focus on the complexities of life on the margins.

In 'The Flashing of Badges' the speaker describes a typical encounter with a 'dead-beat'. The first thing this man does is, metaphorically speaking, 'flash his badge', a symbol of his desire to belong to a group. A badge is also a symbol of respectability, and he craves this, too. The speaker implies that the dead-beat is keen to find common ground with everyone he meets – this is the essential meaning of the fairly light-hearted first stanza of the poem. As the second stanza begins, the mood of the poem darkens perceptibly. The speaker bemoans 'the world's rank injustice' which has left this man without a secure

place in the world. But there is a dilemma – to acknowledge this injustice by giving him money deprives him of the self-deception that keeps him happy. It is the ‘dead-beat’s’ capacity to persuade himself he really *does* belong that keeps him going day to day. The poem ends on a sad note. It reminds us how these men are diminished by the lives they lead: the value of such lives ‘sluices/Seaward with every small indifferent stream.’

‘The Boy’, a deceptively simple account of an outsider looking for a place in a society, is a moving poem. The speaker observes from a distance the arrest of the boy of the title by two police officers in an out-of-the-way rural area, probably in Queensland. What is most surprising about this lad’s attitude is that he seems ‘cheerful enough’ at being apprehended, ‘as though the handcuffs and torn blue shirt-sleeve/ were badges of office’. Again, the motif of the badge recurs as a symbol of status and belonging. The speaker suggests that the boy’s life has been so uneventful that what is normally a distressing event pleases him. He feels ‘as though something important was about to happen to him at last’. Perhaps he feels that someone has noticed him for the first time. The area where he lives is ‘a rich land’ but there is something menacing about it too. It is ‘humid in summer’ and from the trees fall bunya-nuts which ‘could kill you easily,/ indifferently’. This indifference hints at the prevailing atmosphere of the area in which the boy lives. We are led to speculate uneasily at the fate of this boy, unknown, anonymous, alone in the hands of the police. The casual surface tone of the poem masks an underlying concern for its subject’s outsider status.

The nameless family at the centre of ‘Drifters’ never manages to settle down for long in any one place. The repeated ‘and’ at the start of most of the poem’s lines creates a sense of constant movement that evokes the family’s instability. The unripened tomatoes and the ‘last shrivelled fruit’ of the blackberry-canoe epitomise the family’s failure to make a success of their lives. Our sympathy lies especially with the wife and mother of the family, who is so used to moving that she has not even bothered to unpack the bottling set she brought from the family’s last place of residence. She is sadly resigned to her fate: ‘she won’t even ask why they’re leaving this time, or where/ they’re heading for’. The poem’s conclusion is especially poignant, as the speaker describes the

woman's nostalgic recollection of holding out her hands 'bright with berries' and inviting her husband to 'make a wish'. Significantly, only the husband is given a name, underlining the woman's powerlessness in the marriage. She has shrivelled up like the blackberry-canes.

A town likely to contain many outsiders and drifters is Cravensville, the fictional place described in the poem of the same name. This wry poem illuminates 'A place where many go, but few remain'. Cravensville is a nondescript, nowhere town, lacking any real identity of its own. Those coming to the town feel trapped in a place where 'After a week or two the hills close in,/ And what you came to find here moves away', that is, the speaker adds dryly, '(If it was ever here...)'. 'Craven' means fearful, timid, unadventurous, and this reflects the nature of the town. It is a place you would go if you wanted to be overlooked or hide, perhaps if you had committed some 'sin' from which you were running, as the barman implies with a knowing wink. The barman, with his boring 'blowfly drone' of 'justification' for living in this town speaks only to himself; the words 'for him alone' with which the poem closes point to his own dissatisfaction with his life in the town.

'Migrants' illustrates the struggle of newly arrived migrants to Australia to adapt to the realities of their new country and to find a sense of belonging. The poem describes the process of slow but steady acclimatisation to the new country, as both 'old' and 'new' Australians fumble their way towards a genuine connection with one other. The central motifs of the poem are speech and accent. The unfamiliar accent of the migrants finally becomes more accessible to those born in Australia: 'Dour neighbours' eventually 'bent/ Slowly like hazel twigs towards that sound'. The people's 'slurred/ Indifference' which initially confronted the migrants, eventually gives way to an attitude of acceptance. The poem presents a positive view of the migrant experience, showing that new arrivals can be successfully integrated and can enrich their newly adopted country, provided that a spirit of patience and good will prevails on both sides.

In contrast, 'Exiles' is a far darker poem. Here, Dawe condemns white Australia's treatment of our Indigenous people. The people who once belonged to the land no longer have a place here. He depicts Indigenous Australians as a ruined people turned into outsiders – 'exiles' – in their own country. They have

been 'driven derelict across the continent' by white Australians, cut off from their spiritual roots: 'we drove them from their temples in the land.' Turned out 'from their last sanctuaries', Dawe concludes that they are worse off than the early convicts brought to Australia.

Discussion questions

- Do you see the need to belong as a universal human need? Does our need to belong differ throughout the life cycle or is it always as strong?
- To what extent has migration shaped Australia's identity as a nation?
- Do you share Dawe's view of Indigenous Australians as a people whose identity has been destroyed by white Australians' treatment of them?

Those who opt out

At the centre of 'The Family Man' (p.61), 'Up the Wall' (p.128) and 'Reverie of a Swimmer' (p.108) are individuals who choose not to belong. These characters are unhappy in the environments where they live and sometimes express this unhappiness through dangerous or self-destructive behaviour. These poems suggest that it is very easy for an individual's sense of inner security and peace to be undermined.

The ironically titled 'The Family Man' tells the tragic story of the suicide of an apparently contented husband and father. We are shocked to learn that the same man who declared "Kids make a home" on Thursday lies dead by his own hand a mere two days later. Perhaps clichés such as the one he uttered were a mask behind which he concealed his true feelings, perhaps even from himself. This man goes 'over the edge of dark' into a state of despair which destroys him. He cannot have been truly happy in his role as 'the family man'; people who feel secure in themselves and have a strong sense of their own worth do not, as a rule, commit suicide.

It is interesting to consider 'Up the Wall' alongside 'The Family Man.' This poem tells the story of an isolated housewife who is nearing her wits' end. It is ironic that Dawe has chosen the form of a sonnet for this poem, since sonnets have

traditionally been a popular form for love poems. The woman at the centre of the poem is assailed by loud, jarring noises, all detailed in the first stanza. Her world is threatened by 'a hidden menace' that seems destined to overwhelm her. She is surrounded by children and the sounds of domesticity, but feels 'so alone' and imprisoned – disconnected from sources of support and consolation. The couplet with which the poem ends underscores this point. We hear the woman's husband telling his friends that he and his wife live in "a quiet neighbourhood ... Too quiet, almost!" The husband clearly has no idea of his wife's feelings or the noises that assail her. Despite this, he has unwittingly hit upon the truth. The neighbourhood is 'too quiet' – the communication needed to foster a sense of belonging is painfully absent.

'Reverie of a Swimmer' is an imaginary internal monologue spoken by a man who has drowned at sea and whose body has never been recovered. First published in 1968, it is almost certain that this poem was inspired by the disappearance of the late Australian Prime Minister, Harold Holt, in wild surf at Portsea on 17 December 1967. His disappearance was the subject of various rumours and speculation, mostly far-fetched; as the speaker remarks at the end of his monologue, he 'entered the bloodstream of myth.' The speaker explains his death as the end result of his attempt to opt out and find in the water 'escape from the poison of office'. It was not anything in the sea that 'hailed [him] down under', but rather his troubled life on land. This image of drowning as being 'hailed down under' brings to mind the fate of the family man who walked 'over the edge of dark'. In a sense, the speaker of this poem has dropped over that edge, too. '[B]eing human', he felt out of his depth when faced with the burdens of his public life. Indeed, all of these stories relate such tales of human frailty.

Discussion questions

- In what ways might people be damaged by the families and groups of which they are a part?
- In what ways can a strong sense of identity and belonging help us to cope with the difficulties we face in life?

Intimate belonging to families and lovers

A sense of identity and personal security can be strongly intertwined with our intimate ties with loved ones. We can be diminished by the absence of our loved ones, and sometimes we will take risks in order to be with them. These complexities are evident in the poems, 'Suburban Lovers' (p.99), 'With You Not by Me' (p.159), 'Cloth' (p.311) and 'City Lovers' (p.27).

'Suburban Lovers' has a happy voice that reflects the deep delight that each lover derives from the other. Their daily train journeys to and from work are transformed into experiences with a touch of magic as they bask in each other's presence. Together, they form a unified world of contentment as 'Her thoughts lie/ kitten-curved in his'. The strength they give each other is like that which the 'pugnacious flowers' of the pig-face give to the embankments which they cover. In the evening, the lovers are perfectly in tune with the 'breeze blowing/ from a hundred perfumed gardens' and as they kiss a stillness 'comes down upon them like a cone' – an image of the sense of security and protection that each derives from this love relationship.

'City Lovers' offers a contrasting reflection on intimate belonging. Here, the love between these two people appears to be adulterous. They find emotional support and satisfaction outside of the accepted channels. Unlike the suburban lovers, they need to be careful, since they are 'Jaywalkers in the main street of the heart.' Their certainties are 'knife-edged' and in the background is 'the discreet/ Unanswerable ghost they can't dismiss' – their sense of the social illegitimacy of their relationship. Yet their love affair is enriching and comforting to them both: 'Every meeting seems a sort of miracle' and they experience 'lyric moments'. They are aware of the danger in their relationship, but perhaps that gives it an edge of excitement and a new way of defining who they are. The poem shows us that people will take risks and flout social conventions for a connection to the ones with whom they truly feel they belong.

In the ultimate demonstration of selfhood through intimate belonging, a number of Dawe's poems are tributes to his late wife, Gloria. 'With You Not by Me' is one such poem, and in it he expresses his feelings of desolation in the times when his beloved is away from him. Without her, the world looks darker. He is

encouraged 'to believe the worst' and the world seems to take a malicious pleasure in his discomfort: he reflects that, 'when I take up the wrong spoon' all things seem to smile. He is out of sorts, out of harmony with the world. The shape of the poem, with its short stanzas forming a sloping, diagonal pattern, reflects this mood.

'Cloth' is another tribute to a loved one, this time to Dawe's second wife, Liz. This beautiful poem is a simple and direct statement of the importance of family ties and of the strong sense of belonging that they can provide. The dominant metaphor of sewing – the speaker feels 'drawn/ like a thread through a needle by a/ blind love of the seamstress' – reflects his sense of gratitude that he has been woven, so to speak, into the strengthening fabric of other lives. Being a part of their cloth provides a defence against 'the winters of mischance', loneliness and being adrift in an often cruel world.

Discussion questions

- In what ways can good relationships enhance our sense of identity?
- To what extent is your life shaped by your relationships with the people who are important to you?

Reconciling our place in the universe

At the end of 'Walking the Dog' (p.308), Dawe writes of how we are sometimes 'drawn to an otherness which, in return,/ heals and renews like any restful sleep.' One of the major ideas in Dawe's poems is the way we humans fit into the wider scheme of things and our relationship with other, non-human living creatures. We become bigger people when we expand the contexts of our lives; we are diminished when we adopt an anthropocentric view of the world – that view that sees humankind as the measure of all things and considers the rest of creation to be of only marginal significance. 'Othernesses Other than Our Own' (p.297), 'The Hunter at Sunset' (p.50) and 'Planning a Service' (p.230) explore the ways in which we reconcile our place as one of many in the world.

In 'Othernesses Other than Our Own', Dawe questions a view of the world that privileges human experience: 'Sometimes I think it is in other natures that we understand/ our own dominating inconsequence in the world'. An extended meditation on this inconsequence, the poem offers a lesson in perspective: the

non-human creation reminds us that we are not the measure of all things. 'The mother-love of ewes/ for their lambs, of mares for their foals' reminds us of what we share with other creatures.

In contrast with these philosophical musings, 'The Hunter at Sunset' slowly builds towards a shocking conclusion – the killing of animals by a hunter. The speaker's revulsion is clear as he describes the hunter training his gun 'on the vulnerable spot/ Behind the left shoulder, or at the skull's base' of the creature in his sights. The 'lambent light' which flares in the eyes of all the creatures nearby is a 'common denominator' shared by the animals and the hunter. The hunter and the hunted are brought together at this moment; each 'drinks/ From the same fiery pool'. We are reminded through this poignant image of how we as humans belong to the same world as the animals; we are reminded thus of how we diminish ourselves when we destroy their lives.

In 'Planning a Service', Dawe again reminds us of the wider world beyond the human world. In a playful spirit, he imagines planning a church service at which all of creation will participate; even the worms, the bees and the magpies will take part. This church service with a difference is intended to remind us that we are all the better for expanding our view of the universe and our place in it. Dawe underscores this point by ending with a request to 'please leave the church-door open,/ in case a little wind, and a few leaves,/ should sneak in out of the cold', thus signalling our need to be open to this view of our place in the vast community of the world.

Discussion question

- Do you think of humans as the centre of the universe, or do you have a different view?

Points of view on the Context

These discussion topics, writing topics and activities are designed to encourage you to consider some of the questions raised by the Context *Exploring Issues of Identity and Belonging* in *Sometimes Gladness* and to aid you in expanding and developing your own point of view on the key ideas.

Discussion/writing topics

- Identity: given or achieved?
- Not belonging may lead to self-destructive behaviour.
- A solitary life is an unfulfilling life.
- We are too close to ourselves to see ourselves clearly.
- We learn most about ourselves from other people.

Activities

- Make a chart illustrating the different contexts of your life, such as the different groups to which you belong. Explore how each of these groups helps to shape your identity.
- Write about a time when you discovered something new or surprising about yourself.
- Interview a trusted friend or relative in order to write a profile of them. Your profile should describe your own impressions of this person, and also give a sense of how the person sees himself or herself.
- Stage a debate on the topic: 'That it is important for us to feel a strong sense of belonging to our native country.'

Writing in Context: Sample topics

Students will be assessed in Units 3 and 4 and in the end of year examination on writing stimulated by the ideas and arguments found in texts studied in the Context *Exploring Issues of Identity and Belonging*. The following topics provide an opportunity for students to draw on ideas arising from their reading of *Sometimes Gladness* in order to develop their own writing pieces. Written responses may be expository, persuasive or imaginative.

- 1 'We cannot achieve a strong sense of identity unless we also have a strong sense of belonging to something other than ourselves.'
- 2 'Life changes constantly – to survive we need to change with it.'
- 3 'Sometimes we need to compromise to fit into our different environments.'
- 4 'Sometimes our sense of identity is stifled by the groups to which we belong.'
- 5 'We need to examine ourselves closely in order to really understand who we are and who we can become.'

THE TEXT

Dawe, Bruce 2007, *Sometimes Gladness: Collected Poems 1954–2005*, 6th edn, Pearson, Melbourne.

OTHER RESOURCES

The following additional reading and resources will offer you fresh ideas for expanding your point of view on the Context.

Poetry

Dawe, Bruce 1972, *Condolences of the Season*, Cheshire Publishing, Melbourne.

Film

My Life as a Dog 1985, dir. Lasse Hallström, FilmTeknik. Starring Anton Glanzelius, Anki Lidén and Tomas von Brömssen.

The Year My Voice Broke 1987, dir. John Duigan, Kennedy Miller Productions. Starring Loene Carmen, Ben Mendelsohn and Noah Taylor.

Television

Australian Story (ABC, Monday 8pm)

This series presents many interesting stories of the lives of ordinary Australians. One episode worth viewing, 'When Adam was a Boy' (2006), tells the story of Adam Sutton, a gay cowboy in rural New South Wales.

Compass (ABC, Sunday 10pm)

This is a religious affairs programme that often details personal stories of belonging. I recommend the episode entitled 'Craig Turley: Heaven and Hell' (26 February, 2006) about the star West Coast Eagles footballer, Craig Turley. It tells of his early life as an adopted child, and his controversial decision to retire from football at the peak of his career.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ross Walker, Dip Ed, MA, PhD, has taught English and Literature at St Leonard's College, Brighton, since 1989. He completed his PhD on American literature and film about the Vietnam War. He has written extensively on VCE English texts for Insight Publications.